

Lessons learned from complaints received about Waverley's services in 2009/10

The following paragraphs give examples of lessons learned from the complaints received in 2009/10.

Communication between Waverley and its customers

A number of complaints received about development control matters have highlighted a number of issues in relation to processing planning applications. These include:

- The need to check that comments have been received from the relevant Parish Council and that all neighbour representations are covered in the officer report;
- All those commenting on an application who have asked to receive a copy of the final decision notice should always receive this;
- Wherever possible when making a site visit, case officers should check the impact of a proposed development by viewing the site from neighbouring properties;
- The need for closer liaison with building control officers;
- The need to keep all information on the Council's website relating to the planning process, up to date.

Other communications issues have included the importance of ensuring that all new tenants are given clear and accurate information at the start of their tenancy on all matters relating to their new home, in particular heating systems and allocation of gardens where these are shared.

Internal communications

One development control complaint has highlighted the need for more effective communication between the Development Control and Building Control sections.

A number of complaints have emphasised the need to ensure that information about changes in a customer's personal circumstances eg granting of power of attorney, change of address is shared with all relevant service areas.

Improvements/changes to administrative procedures

As in the previous year, the investigation of complaints in 2009/10 has highlighted the following general administrative issues:

- The need to keep computer systems updated at all times;
- The importance of accurate record keeping, particularly in relation to telephone calls from customers.
- Staff should take care not to over promise and under deliver when dealing with customers complaints/enquiries.

Issues raised in relation to the delivery of specific services include:

- The importance of keeping tenants updated with the progress of repairs and maintenance work at their home.
- The need to check bills presented by private landlords carefully before issuing invoices.
- The importance of parking patrol officers keeping officers updated about problems in individual carparks eg flyposting.